



# Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework for Secondary Schools Guidelines and Recommendations

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## **Response to Intervention (RtI) in Secondary Schools: Guidelines and Recommendations**

### **The Challenge**

About 22 percent of ninth graders in Pennsylvania fail to graduate from high school four years later, and, among those who graduate, many lack the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in postsecondary education and careers that pay family-sustaining incomes (PDE Ensuring Success for All High School Graduates, 2007). As noted by the Center for Social Organization of Schools at Johns Hopkins University and the Philadelphia Education Fund, about half of all high school dropouts can be predicted by sixth grade (Balfanz and Herzog, 2005). Researchers identified risk factors (failing sixth grade reading and failing sixth grade math, poor attendance, and poor behavior), any one of which could predict a student not completing high school. Another 30 percent of future dropouts manifest the same types of risk factors – failing core subjects, poor attendance, and behavior problems – by ninth grade. (Neild and Balfanz, 2006) Potential dropouts (up to 80 %) can be identified before students begin their sophomore year.

The educational community must develop programs and supports to improve the academic achievement and relational (social emotional) success of secondary students in order to address these concerning statistics.

**Rationale for a Secondary Response to Intervention (RtI) Framework:** Secondary schooling represents a major transition in a student's academic career. Typically the move transition means changing schools, changing teachers for content courses, and meeting the demands of more complex academic content and assignments (Johnson and Smith, 2008). These new challenges require independent learning, critical thinking, and a complex set of social skills for students to be successful in middle and high school. To meet these challenges and experience academic success, some students need additional supports. Due to a variety of causes, including increased academic demands, language deficiencies, transience, and learning difficulties, intervening early and systematically to prevent student failure and disengagement from the learning process is essential.

“Response to intervention integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems. With RtI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities” (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2008).

Response to Intervention holds promise for middle and high schools by aligning curriculum, instruction, assessment, infrastructure, social/emotional, behavioral supports and interventions to increase learning opportunities and improve achievement for secondary students.

RtI implementation across the nation has been clearly focused on elementary grades to this point. While there are fewer attempts at implementation at the secondary level, there is a

growing need to establish secondary response models in an effort to build a strong core curriculum and proactive interventions at a systemic level, K-12 (Burns & Gibbons, 2008).

This document provides guidance for **designing, implementing, and sustaining** a Response to Intervention model at the secondary level.

### Secondary RtI Framework and the PA Standards Aligned System (SAS)

RtI is a comprehensive, multi-tiered and **standards-aligned** framework to enable early identification and intervention for students at academic or behavioral risk. It is also an alternative to the discrepancy model for the identification of students with learning disabilities. RtI allows educators to identify and address academic and behavioral difficulties prior to student failure. The goal of RtI is to improve student achievement using research-based interventions matched to the instructional need and level of the student.

High quality instruction, standards-aligned instruction, universal screening, shared ownership, data-based decision making, tiered intervention and service delivery system, and parental engagement are key components of PA's RtI framework and are aligned to the Pennsylvania Standards Aligned Systems (SAS). The Pennsylvania SAS is a collaborative product of research and good practice that identifies six distinct elements which, if utilized together, will provide schools and districts with a common framework for continuous school and district enhancement or improvement. The six common elements are as follows: Clear Standards, Fair Assessments, Curriculum Framework, Instruction, Materials and Resources, and Interventions.



SAS 6 Circles - Explained	
<u>Clear Standards</u>	Clear, high standards that establish what all students need to know and be able to accomplish.
<u>Fair Assessments</u>	Fair assessments aligned to the standards.
<u>Curriculum Framework</u>	A framework specifying Big Ideas, Concepts, and Competencies in each subject area/at each grade level.
<u>Instruction</u>	Aligned instruction--aligning instruction with standards involves identifying strategies that are best suited to help students achieve the expected performance.
<u>Materials and Resources</u>	Materials that address the standards.
<u>Interventions</u>	A safety net/intervention system that insures all students meet standards.

These six elements in the Pennsylvania Standards Aligned Systems are integrated throughout the RtI model.








A review of the literature indicates various RtI models, however all models have common key components: high quality effective general education instruction, school wide screening, progress monitoring, tiered interventions, and fidelity (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2008). These components form the basis for Pennsylvania's RtI framework which includes the following: Standards Aligned Instruction, Universal Screening of Academics and Behavior, Shared Ownership, Data-based Decision Making, Tiered Intervention and Service Delivery, and Parental Engagement.

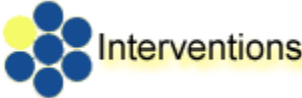

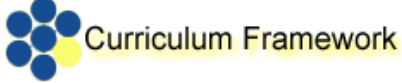
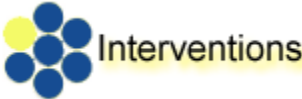
Although no comprehensive research studies have been conducted on RtI implementation in secondary schools, case studies indicate challenges beyond those at the elementary level (Mellard & Layland with Parsons, 2008). Changes in organizational structure, a shift in academic focus, and increasing non-school responsibilities for students represent the strongest contrasts between elementary and secondary schools (Sugai, 2004). In addition, few secondary-level interventions have the same level of evidence on which to support their use as elementary-level interventions (Johnson and South, 2008). However, "secondary RtI implementation is conducted based upon a solid core of what works to increase achievement and behavioral outcomes, including effective reading instruction, increasing content literacy (e.g., Biancarosa & Snow, 2004), the Strategic Instructional Model (e.g., Lenz, Deshler, & Kissm, 2003), effective secondary behavior support (e.g., Sprick, 2006) and numerous other validated interventions" (Shinn, 2008).

### **Components of PA's Secondary Schools RtI model**

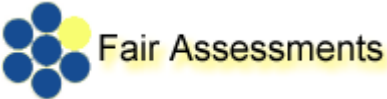
1. High-quality general education instruction using a standards-aligned "core curriculum" for all students.
2. Relational Support (In-school, Family, Community) systems to provide students the social/emotional and behavioral supports needed to be engaged in the learning process and to complete their elected course of study.
3. Scientific or evidence based interventions that include instructional methodologies and strategies and application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs for identified at-risk students.
4. Tiered Interventions in which students are provided increasing levels of support, i.e. time and intensity of instruction and assessment, matched to their identified needs.
5. Data-based decision-making to design and modify instruction based upon formative and summative assessments including universal screening, progress monitoring, benchmark assessment and outcome assessment.
6. Relevant professional development for all staff.




## Components of a Secondary RtI Framework

RtI and SAS Components	Guidelines/Suggestions
<p>1. High-quality classroom instruction/Standards-aligned core curriculum</p> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;">  <p>Clear Standards</p>  <p>Instruction</p>  <p>Curriculum Framework</p> </div>	<p>All students receive instruction in an integrated system of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. A prioritized written curriculum, aligned with the taught and assessed curriculum provides the foundation across all subject areas. The curriculum has rigor and relevance and makes direct and explicit connections to the PA Academic Standards.</p> <p>A “core curriculum” at the secondary level includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A comprehensive and coordinated literacy/communication arts program that continues to provide reading instruction to enhance and/or remediate reading difficulties.</li> <li>2. Common evidence-based instructional practices that represent “core” practices across all subject areas (ex: SIM, Marzano’s Classroom Instruction that Works, Teaching Matters, Wiliam’s Changing Classroom Practice). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high-quality content instruction, following evidence-based practices (students learn critical content required in core curriculum regardless of literacy levels (Deshler)</li> <li>• specific embedded strategies selected at each grade level that represent the “core” to achieve proficiency with the content</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<p>2. Relational Support</p> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;">  <p>Clear Standards</p>  <p>Instruction</p>  <p>Curriculum Framework</p>  <p>Materials and Resources</p> </div>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A structured system is in place to provide students the appropriate level and intensity of support needed to engage in academic learning, remain in school and complete course requirements successfully.</li> <li>2. The system includes the elements of Pennsylvania’s Resiliency/ Wellness systemic approach*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Expectations</li> <li>• Meaningful Student Engagement</li> <li>• Connectiveness and Bonding</li> <li>• Skills for Life</li> <li>• Clear and Consistent Boundaries</li> <li>• Unconditional Support</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><i>*Adapted from Henderson, N. &amp; Milstein, M. Resiliency in Schools: Making it Happen for Students and Educators (Corwin Press, 2003).</i></p> <p>Attendance, discipline, behavior, and student performance data are used and monitored to design and implement a tiered system of academic and relational support.</p>

Rtl and SAS Components	Guidelines/Suggestions
<p>3. Scientifically/evidence based interventions, instructional methodologies and strategies</p>   	<p>Well-designed programs characterized by:</p> <p>1. high quality instruction and interventions matched to student need (Batsche, 2006).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interventions and instructional methodologies that have proven effectiveness matched to specific demands in course content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Marzano’s 9 categories of instructional interventions (<a href="http://www.mcrel.org/product/19">http://www.mcrel.org/product/19</a>)</li> <li>○ Ellis’ 10 Effective Teaching Principles (<a href="http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&amp;_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED386853&amp;ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&amp;accno=ED386853">http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&amp;_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED386853&amp;ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&amp;accno=ED386853</a>)</li> <li>○ Strategic Instruction Model and Content Enhancement Routines (<a href="http://www.ku-crl.org">http://www.ku-crl.org</a>)</li> <li>○ PBIS (<a href="http://www.pbis.org/main.htm">http://www.pbis.org/main.htm</a>)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• explicit and systematic instruction of strategies (direct explanation, modeling, and group practice)</li> <li>• intensive writing across the curriculum</li> <li>• intensive basic skill instruction to develop missing foundational skills (Communication Arts courses)</li> </ul> <p>2. monitoring progress frequently to make changes in instruction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• formative assessment, including progress monitoring</li> <li>• fidelity checks</li> </ul> <p>3. applying student response data to making educational decisions.</p>
<p>4. Tiered Instructional Interventions</p> 	<p>Students are provided increasing levels of support matched to their needs. Frequency and intensity are adjusted based on progress monitoring data and integrity checks are conducted on a routine basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 1: Instruction in the core subject areas (English or English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science).</li> <li>• Tier 2: Targeted instruction and behavioral/relational support in addition to the core.</li> <li>• Tier 3: Intensive instruction and relational support in addition to the core.</li> </ul> <p>See Secondary Rtl Tiered Framework for a detailed discussion of each tier.</p>



Rtl and SAS Components	Guidelines/Suggestions
<p>5. Data-based decision-making</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data teams: A structured data teaming process collects, analyzes and uses student data to adjust instruction, interventions and supports.</li> <li>2. Universal Screening at the Secondary Level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brief and efficient screening measures used</li> <li>• All students' literacy performance is profiled</li> </ul> <p>Examples of what might be included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PSSA Reading and Writing proficiency levels</li> <li>○ Word and Passage Reading Fluency</li> <li>○ Word Analysis Skills</li> <li>○ Comprehension</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Data Based Decision Making: Guiding Principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment decisions implemented school-wide</li> <li>• Assessments are defined and understood: i.e., screening, diagnostic, benchmark, formative, and summative assessment.</li> <li>• Teachers collaborate in well-designed teams</li> <li>• Lines of inquiry, decision-making and problem-solving models established</li> <li>• Culture and practices shift from a deficiency model to one of providing instruction that meets the needs of <u>all</u> students. The staff recognizes the complexities of student achievement. There is system-wide focus on literacy success as a foundational priority.</li> <li>• There is tight alignment of curriculum, assessment, and instruction.</li> <li>• The professional staff interprets student achievement and growth data and uses it to identify and implement interventions that support student progress in a multi-tiered system.</li> <li>• Multiple data points are used to make decisions about students.</li> <li>• Exit criteria are established at Tiers 2 and 3.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Formative (formal and informal) and summative assessment practices are in place including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• universal screening, (ex: DIBELS, Aimsweb, attendance, grades, PVAAS projections, PSSA)</li> <li>• progress monitoring (Aimsweb, DIBELS)</li> <li>• benchmark assessments (district writing assessments, 4Sight)</li> <li>• outcome assessment (PSSA)</li> <li>• writing samples</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

Rtl and SAS Components	Guidelines/Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required decisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Who conducts the assessments?</li> <li>○ Who collects the data?</li> <li>○ What system will be used to warehouse the data?</li> <li>○ What formats will be most useful for the teachers/teams?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>6. Professional Development</p>  <p>Fair Assessments</p>  <p>Instruction</p>  <p>Materials and Resources</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assessment strategies and tools</li> <li>2. Evaluation of data: data analysis/root cause analysis</li> <li>3. Reading and writing strategies (across the content)</li> <li>4. Selection and implementation of appropriate Tier 2/3 interventions</li> <li>5. Core strategies (ex: SIM, Marzano's Classroom Instruction That Works, Ellis)</li> </ol>

## Secondary RtI Framework Component 4: Tiered Interventions/Instruction Additional Considerations

*Reading Next* by the Alliance for Education, identified the following key elements in programs designed to improve adolescent literacy achievement in middle and high schools (p.12).

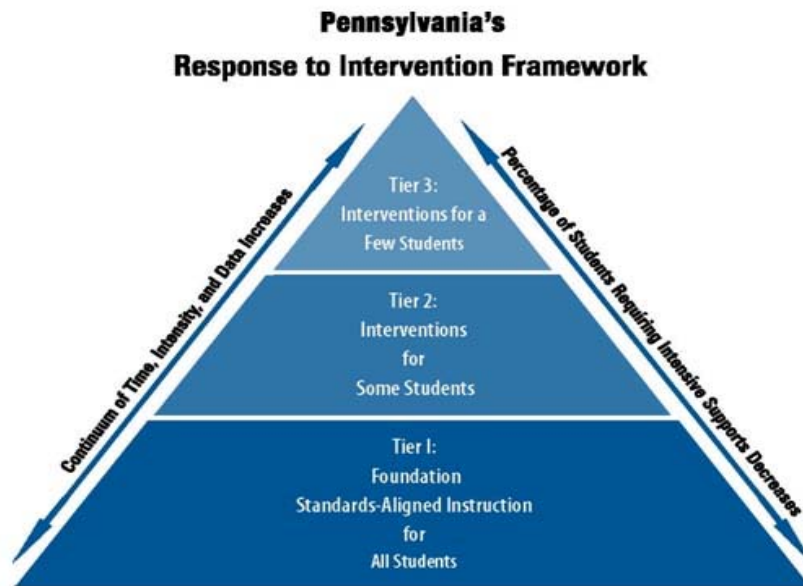
Instructional Improvements	Infrastructure Improvements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Direct, explicit comprehension instruction</li> <li>2. Effective instructional principles embedded in content</li> <li>3. Motivation and self-directed learning</li> <li>4. Text-based collaborative learning</li> <li>5. Strategic tutoring</li> <li>6. Diverse texts</li> <li>7. Intensive writing</li> <li>8. A technology component</li> <li>9. Ongoing formative assessment of students</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extended time for literacy skill development</li> <li>2. Professional development targeted to evidence-based practices</li> <li>3. Ongoing formative and summative assessment of students</li> <li>4. Teacher teams collaborating on data and evidence-based strategies</li> <li>5. Instructional leadership by building principal</li> <li>6. A comprehensive and coordinated literacy program.</li> </ol>

Recent work by Joanne Allain (LETRS Conference 2008 recommendations) outlined the following tiered intervention options as possible organizational structures.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<p>Tier 1 and 2 students receive grade level instruction in heterogeneous classes.</p> <p>Tier 2 students receive an extra period of strategic intervention.</p> <p>Students receive Tier 3 interventions for two periods</p> <p>Classes occur throughout the day</p>	<p>Tier 1 and 2 students receive grade level instruction in heterogeneous classes.</p> <p>Tier 2 students receive an extra period of strategic intervention in homogeneous classes.</p> <p>Tier 3 students receive two periods of intensive instruction that is either in addition to or replaces the core and an elective class.</p> <p>Reading/Language Arts classes are parallel scheduled.</p>	<p>All Language Arts classes are homogeneously grouped in two period blocks. (School C – majority of students are in intensive in the beginning)</p> <p>Tier 1 and 2 students receive grade level instruction plus an extra period for enrichment or strategic instruction.</p> <p>Tier 3 students receive two periods of intensive intervention that is either in addition to or replaces grade level instruction and an elective class. Classes are parallel scheduled to allow student movement based on data.</p>

These design elements were incorporated, as appropriate, into PA’s recommended tiered structure for secondary schools.

## Secondary RtI Framework Component 4: Tiered Instruction



### **Tier 1: Standards Aligned Core Instruction for All (100%) Students:**

- High-quality and well-defined instruction provided to all students. Part of the “core” is typically provided in a whole class structure and part is provided during small group, differentiated instruction (Stupski). The “core curriculum” at the secondary level consists of the prioritized content specified in the district curriculum, with specific core strategies (SIM; Marzano, Ellis) implemented at each grade level.
  - School wide effective behavior support program is in place and includes a defined policy and plan for consistent administrator and staff implementation, clearly articulated expectations for all students, a defined system to recognize positive behavior including incentives, structured advisories, explicit teaching of desired behaviors, rules, and routines, and a physical environment conducive to learning.
  - The elements of Pennsylvania’s Resiliency/Wellness Systemic Approach, which include: high expectations; meaningful student engagement; connectiveness and bonding; skills for life; clear and consistent boundaries; and unconditional supports are embedded within instructional and behavioral RtI designs.
- Clear expectations are established for daily attendance with a planned response to every absence and programs to reinforce good attendance.
  - A grading system that rewards what has been learned rather than the process of learning.

### **Tier 2: Targeted Group Instruction for Some (15-20%) Students:**

- Strategic instruction is in addition to core instruction and provides explicit instruction with guided practice in targeted areas for students who show evidence of inadequate response to the high quality instruction provided in Tier 1. Support is provided in a small

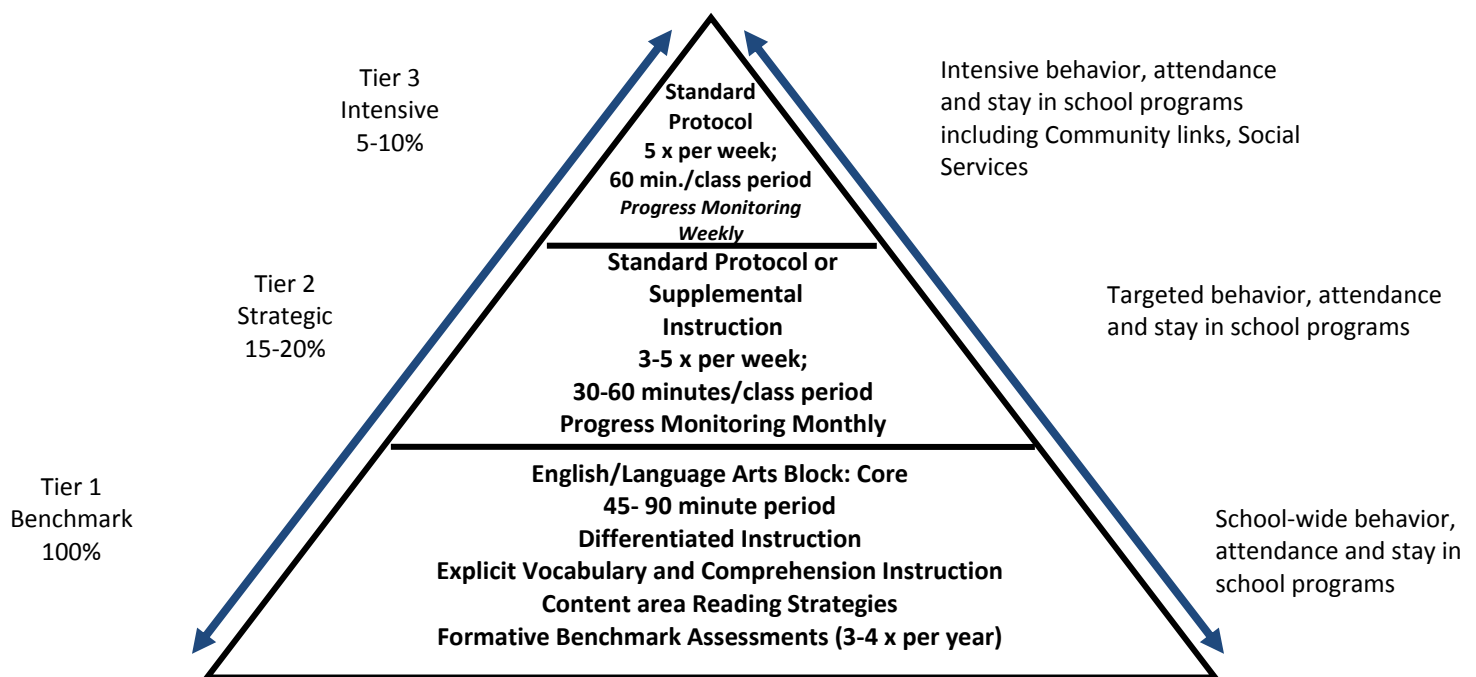
group either inside the classroom or outside the classroom through a specific reading or math class or supplemental/extended day program (reading comprehension lab, vocabulary lab, math skills and application). Specific evidence-based interventions are utilized and progress monitoring is conducted at least monthly. Bi-weekly progress monitoring is recommended.

- Additional behavioral interventions are in place to support students and may include increased cues and prompts, mentoring, peer support programs, a system to reward positive behavior, including incentives and structured advisories.
- Attendance is monitored and reported daily. Routine collaboration with parents and community agencies occurs.

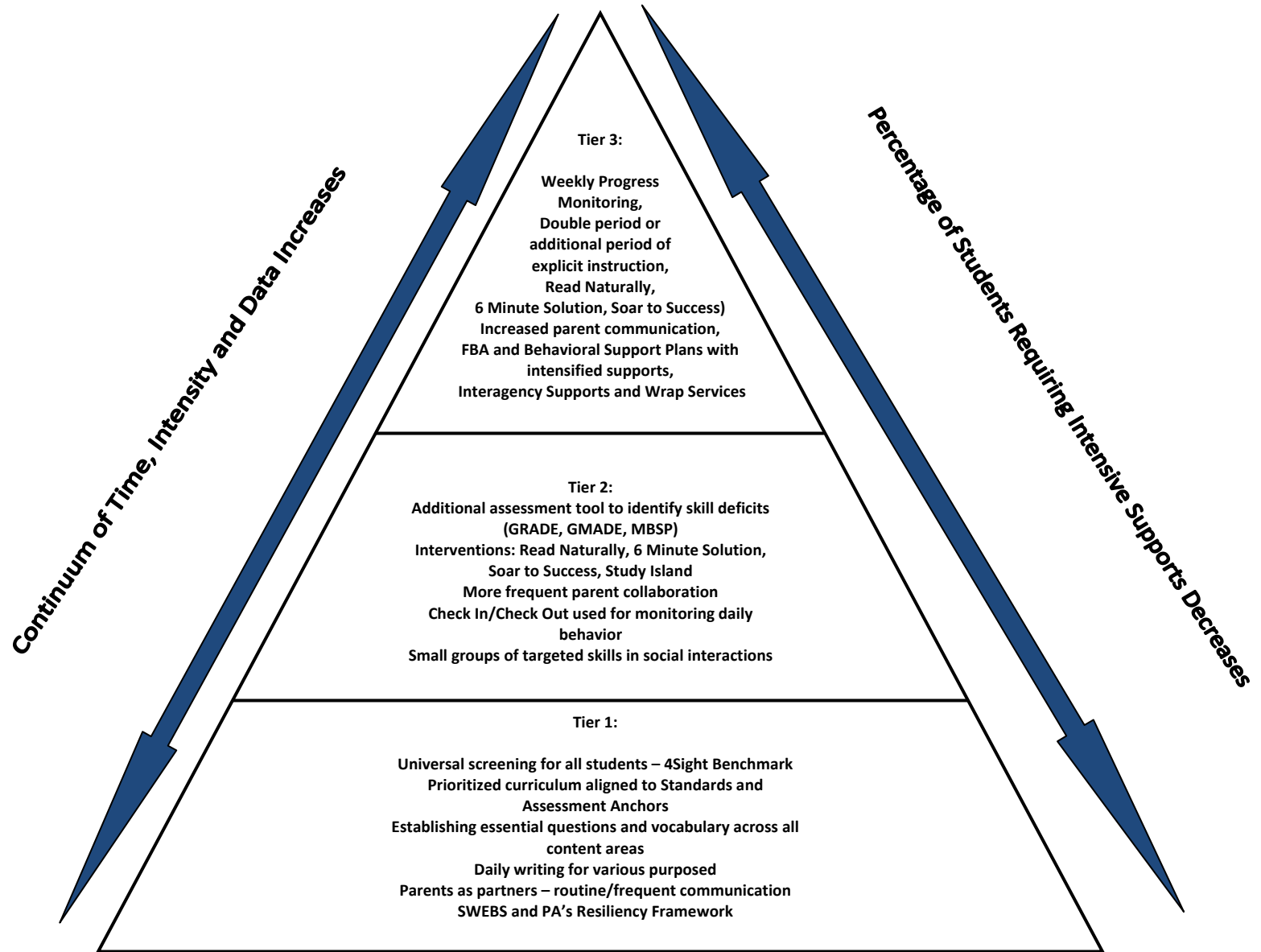
### **Tier 3: Intensive Instruction for a Few (5-10%) Students:**

- Instruction provided to students who are significantly below proficiency levels and have inadequate response to interventions provided at Tiers 1 and 2. Interventions are provided to develop basic reading or math skills and may be implemented using an intervention program that is specifically designed to address one or more critical areas of reading or math while at the same time accelerating their growth toward grade-level reading or math ability. This additional support may include specific skill instruction in smaller groups than those in Tier 2 and or tutoring. Progress monitoring occurs weekly.
- Behavior assessment and individualized plans are developed for a few students who require intensive interventions and may include contracts with students and families, integrated school/community supports, daily reporting to families, and student assistance programs.

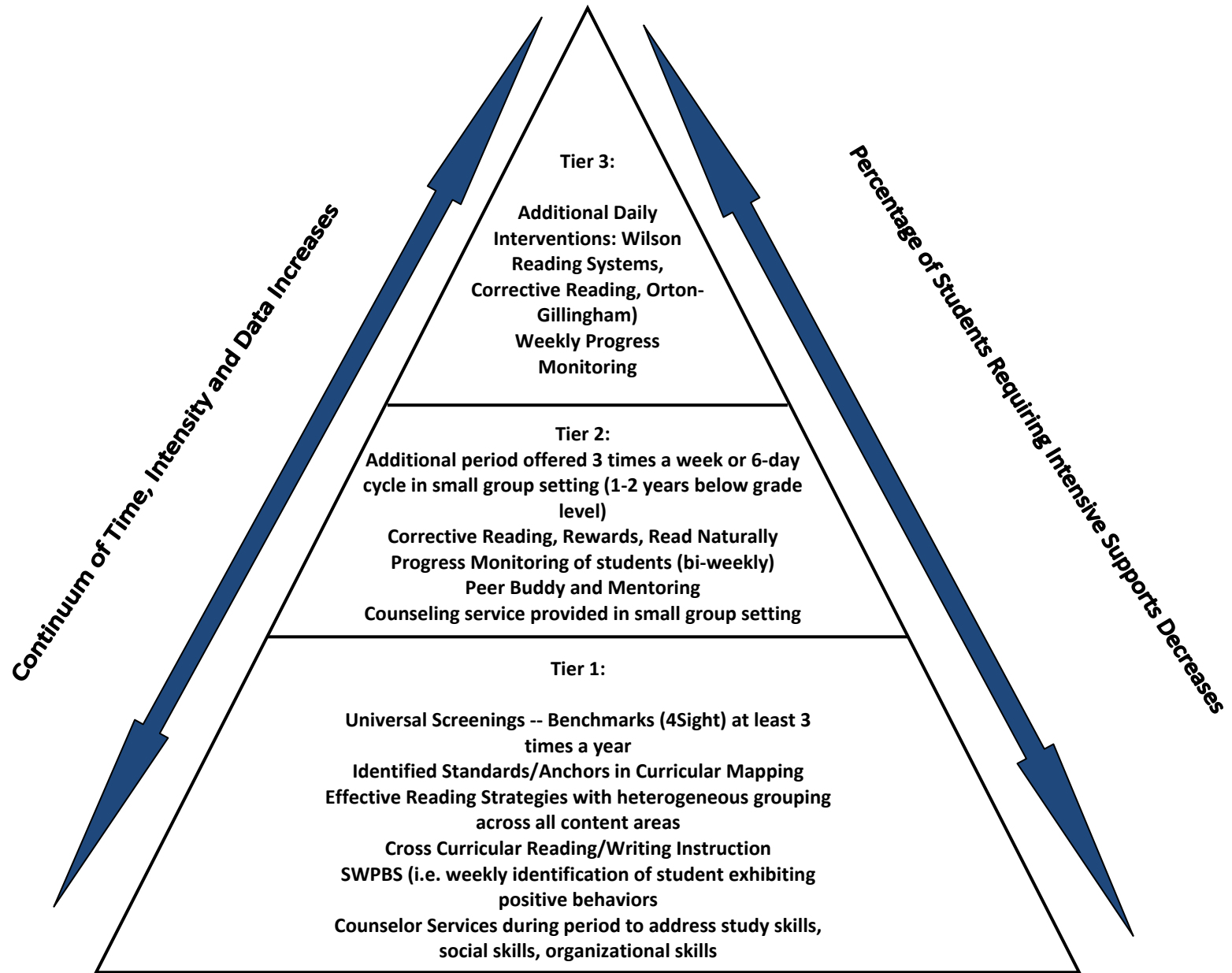
### **Pennsylvania's Secondary RtI Framework**



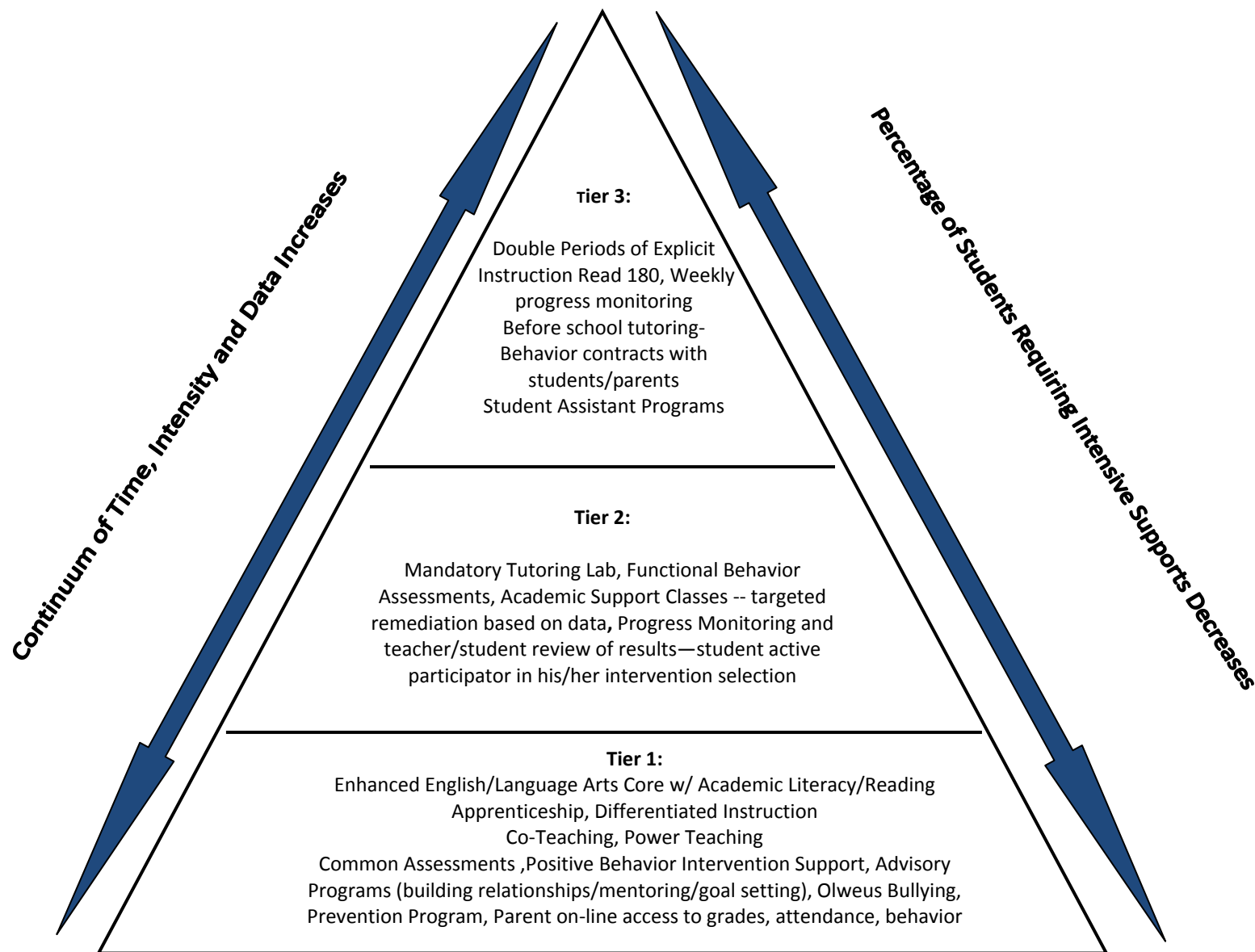
## Secondary RtI Example: School A (Middle School)



## Secondary RtI Example: School B (Middle School)



## Secondary RtI Example: School C (High School--Traditional 8 period day)





## Secondary RtI Example: School D (High School)



### Secondary RtI Example: School E - Content Literacy Continuum (CLC)

<b>Level I: Enhanced content instruction</b> – instructional approaches that build proficiency in critical content for all students, regardless of literacy levels, that equip them with competitive, high-end skills that ensure successful post-graduate options.
<b>Level II: Embedded strategy instruction</b> – instructional strategies within and across classes for all students using large group instructional methods that allow optimal access to rigorous college-ready curriculum
<b>Level III: Intensive strategy instruction</b> – instructional approaches that build mastery of specific strategies for students needing short-term, strategic instruction on strategies embedded throughout classroom instruction
<b>Level IV: Intensive basic skill instruction</b> - instructional approaches that build mastery of entry-level literacy skills for students needing intensive, accelerated literacy intervention
<b>Level V: Therapeutic intervention</b> – instructional approaches that build mastery of language underpinnings related to the curriculum content and learning strategies occurring throughout classroom instruction for language-disabled students

Lenz, B. K., Ehren, B. J., Deshler, D. D. (2005). The content literacy continuum: A school reform framework for improving adolescent literacy for all students. *Teaching Exceptional Children*. 37(6), 60-63.

See also the Secondary Literacy Instruction and Intervention Guide at  
[http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Secondary\\_Literacy\\_Instruction\\_Intervention\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.centeroninstruction.org/files/Secondary_Literacy_Instruction_Intervention_Guide.pdf).

## **Implementing RtI at the Secondary Level**

### **Secondary Level Challenges:**

What appears to be consistent at this point is that researchers and practitioners should be willing to commit to a process that will take longer to implement and assess than implementation at the primary level (Sugai et al., 2005). The process of fully implementing an RtI model in secondary schools can take five to eight years, rather than the three to five years typically needed in elementary schools (Mellard & Layland with Parsons, 2008).

Key differences in regard to systems-level change at the secondary level:

1. Fewer strategies or models to implement RtI at a secondary level as compared to implementing at the elementary level
2. Multiple feeder schools from elementary to secondary
3. Higher teacher-student ratio at secondary as compared to elementary (Middle and high school teachers are responsible for significantly higher number of students than an elementary teacher)
4. Teachers as content specialists and may lack knowledge and skills in the effective teacher of reading
5. Lack of school-wide collaborative work due to organizational variables including schedules, lack of team structures and larger staff size
6. Increased focus on knowledge dissemination and independent skill application as opposed to skill development
7. Student expectations including: independent self-monitoring, organization, self motivation and increased responsibility for learning
8. Non-school responsibilities (e.g., driving, dating, and employment)
9. Decreased structures in place to foster parent involvement

Successful components of systems change at the secondary level (Waters, T. et al. 2003 and Witt, J. 2006):

1. Active involvement of students
2. Active and visible involvement, commitment, and leadership by administrators.
3. Start with small scale and initial implementation
4. Integrate “new” initiatives into already existing programs and initiatives.
5. Re-organize into smaller learning communities
6. Develop understanding among faculty:
  - a. Not all students are self-motivated by academic and social success.
  - b. Natural consequences (e.g., not graduating, not getting senior privileges) will not be sufficient for behavior change for all students.
  - c. Student knowledge of and capacity to perform appropriate social/behavior skills should not be assumed and must be explicitly taught.

## Secondary Response to Intervention – Stages of Implementation

This section is designed to assist the district/school in building and implementing a successful RtI strategy. Three stages of implementation (readiness, operational and evaluation) are described with a set of questions for consideration at the district, building and classroom level (Fixsen, et al., 2005).

### 1. Readiness Stage

The readiness stage informs and prepares districts to begin the implementation of an RtI approach at the secondary level. The RtI approach provides for the regular monitoring of all students to determine their progress, and the use of evidence based instruction and interventions that are customized to meet individual student needs.

#### A. Readiness Stages:

1. Assess the district's capacity for undertaking an RtI initiative at the secondary level
2. Determine how secondary RtI relates to existing programs within the district
3. Identify the potential barriers to implementing an RtI model at the secondary level
4. Plan for administrative and key stakeholder buy-in

#### B. District-level Questions for Consideration:

1. How is RtI articulated in regard to other initiatives and programs at the secondary level? Where is the fit? The overlap?
2. What are the strategies for building awareness and consensus in regard to the district's RtI model?
3. What are the supports in place for proactively addressing the challenges brought to bear as staff experience the various levels inherent in any systemic change?
4. What are the professional development needs of administrators, professional staff, and support staff? How and when will staff be in-serviced?
5. Do all staff know the components of a standards-aligned system and how these components impact classroom practices?

#### C. Building-level questions for consideration (refer to *Response to Intervention Readiness and Implementation: Self Assessment Tool*. November, 2007 revised, PDE):

#### D. Classroom-level questions for consideration:

1. What is the core curriculum and is it aligned to standards and being implemented with fidelity?
2. Are there established grade-level/course benchmarks? Are these benchmarks measured using common assessments?
3. Are research-based instructional practices being utilized?

#### E. Professional development

1. What awareness sessions (faculty/administrative team meeting discussions, sharing of articles, etc.) are provided for teachers to understand the intent of RtI?
2. Who are the key stakeholders for introductory level professional development activities? (1-day workshops, site visits, webinars, book study groups, etc.)

## **2. Operational Stage**

During the operational stage, districts must identify high-school appropriate intervention models that will work across subjects, determine universal instruction and assessment practices across subjects, and plan for professional development.

- A. Training and Implementation (1-3 years)
  1. Provide an initial awareness training for all staff.
  2. Follow-up with job-embedded training to build deep understanding of the process.
  3. Examine existing system (structures, schedules, staffing, and resources) for barriers to implementation and make changes based upon implementing an RtI model with fidelity.
- B. Implementation Tools and Procedures (1 year)
  1. Identify the domains to be screened at the secondary level (e.g. reading comprehension, math computation, writing fluency).
  2. Identify the universal screening tools, aligned to PA standards/district benchmarks, to be used with all students.
  3. Train staff in their use and data analysis protocols.
  4. Develop Tier Model.
    - a. Tier 1: Administer the identified universal screening tools 3-4 times per year to all students (e.g. 4-Sight). Assemble data packets with assessment results for data teams. Provide opportunities for team analysis of results using an established data team protocol.
    - b. Tier 2: Students identified for Tier 2 receive standard protocol interventions to include, but not be limited to: differentiated instruction, additional time, supplemental materials, short term interventions, and progress monitoring (a minimum of 1 time per month)
      - i. Consider the intensity of an intervention (amount of time for intervention, the size of the instructional group, means of service delivery, and the nature of the selected intervention)
      - ii. Consider how to deliver additional services
      - iii. Determine how progress monitoring will be administered and by whom
      - iv. Establish exit and entrance criteria for tiers 2 and 3
    - c. Tier 3: Students identified for Tier 3 require more intensive interventions and progress monitoring (a minimum of 1 time per week).
  5. Determine efficient use of time.
    - a. Flexible scheduling
    - b. Staffing considerations
    - c. Before school and after school programs

- d. Summer school
  - e. Differentiate among “homework help”, tutoring, and remediation
- C. Develop policy and procedures (6 months – 1 year).
- D. Develop screening cut points/scores.
- E. Select screening and diagnostic assessments.
  - a. Tier 1 – 4-Sight
  - b. Tier 2 – Curriculum-based assessments for reading fluency, math computation, and writing fluency (e.g. Aimsweb)
  - c. Tier 3 – Evidence-based supplemental materials assessments

A key outcome of evidence-based education is for scientifically proven interventions to be adopted and successfully implemented at the classroom level (from *Identifying Research-based Practices for RtI: Scientifically-based Reading Instruction*, p. 21).
- F. Establish a data analysis/problem-solving protocol.
  - a. Develop screening cut points
  - b. Select and refine interventions
  - c. Ensure fidelity of implementation
  - d. Develop a protocol or means of movement through the tiers
  - e. Develop a timeline and sequence of procedures (meeting times, meeting agenda, RtI script (Data Analysis Team Process, Kovaleski, 2004), Screening and Intervention Record Form (Kovaleski & Marco, 2005).

### **3. Evaluation Stage**

- A. Evaluate staff development at the end of year one (consider use of the RtI School Readiness Survey in August. Surveys may be found at [www.pattan.net](http://www.pattan.net) or [www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org) ).
- B. Consider conducting the survey in May to compare the two sets of data to determine the degree of adoption and what, if anything needs further development.
- C. Review overall data with regard to how many students were assisted in each tier; how long each student stayed in each tier; individual student progress as noted through various benchmarks and assessments.
- D. Analyze each tier and make recommendations/changes with regard to staffing, scheduling, and how/when and by whom progress is monitored.
- E. Refine movement through each tier with regard to timelines and interventions being implemented.

## Rtl Glossary

**Assessment** – This term refers to the broad process of obtaining information used for decision-making about a student, group of students, curricula, educational programs, and school programs as well as educational policy (Nitko & Brookhart, 2007).

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)** – This term, integral to the No Child Left Behind legislation, refers to the annual minimum growth rate needed to meet the requirements of NCLB within the timeframe specified ([www.studentprogress.org](http://www.studentprogress.org)).

**Assessment Modifications** (assessments): Changes in the test or assessment conditions that fundamentally alter the test score interpretation and comparability.

**Baseline** – Salvia, Ysseldyke, and Bolt (2007) refer to this term as the “initial measures of performance against which future measures will be compared” (p. 658).

**Benchmarks** – McMillan (2007) defines this as content or development standards that describe sequences of growth that allow for the monitoring of progress over time.

**Benchmark assessment** – In a standards-based system, a benchmark assessment refers to the periodic testing that monitors students’ progress towards an end-goal, often a high-stakes test. These assessments are used to measure student learning, monitor progress, and adjust instruction (McMillan, 2007).

**Collaborative team:** A group of two or more people (as described above) who meet on a scheduled or as-need basis and fill a specific function or purpose. Collaborative teams can be formed both at the district and school levels. School-based teams are developed and sustained as determined by need and are accessible to any administrator or teacher concerned with the educational needs of students.

**Core Curriculum:** The planned instruction in a content area, which is central and usually mandatory for all students of a school (e.g. reading/language arts, math, science, etc.).

**Curriculum-Based Assessment (CBA)** – A formative measure, CBA is a criterion-referenced test that is typically teacher constructed and is based on the curriculum. It is intended for teacher use to measure how students are doing within the curriculum (Idol, Nevin, Paolucci–Whitcomb, 1996).

**Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM)** – CBM is a set of methods or procedures used to assess academic skills in reading, spelling, mathematics, and writing. Scores typically represent changes in accuracy as well as fluency. CBM is a set of methods that allow for the indexing of student academic competence and student progress (Deno, Fuchs, Marston, & Shin, 2001).

**Data Informed Decision-Making** – This term, which has become more pervasive in the educational literature since the passage of the NCLB Act of 2001, is defined by Salvia, Yssledyke, and Bolt (2007) as being synonymous with progress monitoring because both terms require both the collection and use of data. The term implies that instruction is adjusted based on the frequent monitoring of student progress by comparing expected and actual rates of learning.

**Evaluation** – McMillan defines this term as the process of interpreting evidence that has been gathered to make the information meaningful. According to McMillan, “teachers’ professional judgments play a large role in evaluation” (2007, p.10).

**Explicit instruction:** Instruction that is clear, overt, and visible.

**Fidelity:** A teacher demonstrates that instructional programs, strategies, and materials are implemented with intensity and accuracy, and consistently delivered as they have been designed and validated, as elaborated in teacher’s guides available from publishers.

**Five “Big Ideas” of Reading:** (Phonemic awareness, phonics/word study, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension); critical areas of reading for all Tiers.

**Flexible Grouping:** The ability to assign and adjust groups of learners based on their mastery of content and skills.

**Formative assessment** – Formative assessment consists of collecting student performance data on a continuous basis in order to make program changes while instruction is taking place, rather than waiting until the end of the year, or the end of a course to evaluate progress (Graney & Shinn, 2005). Formative assessment is a broad category of assessment that not only encompasses progress monitoring, but also includes tests, quizzes, observations, checklists, etc. if used for the purpose of monitoring progress to adjust instruction.

**Implicit instruction:** An instructional ideology that assumes that students are naturally active learners who construct new personalized knowledge through linking prior knowledge and new knowledge. In implicit instruction, the teacher guides students only as much as is necessary for them to build their own understanding. Scaffolding, or teacher support through questioning and explaining, is provided only as needed.

**Instructional intervention:** Explicit and systematic instruction delivered by highly skilled teachers tailored to meet the identified needs of struggling readers. This instruction is delivered in small groups.

**Intense intervention:** Explicit and systematic instruction delivered by highly skilled teacher specialists. This instruction is targeted and tailored to meet the needs of struggling readers in small groups with increased opportunities for practice and teacher feedback.



**Measurement** – Differing from assessment, this term refers to the procedure of assigning scores or numbers to describe the degree to which a student has acquired a certain skill or attribute (Nitko & Brookhart, 2007).

**No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)** – President Bush signed this legislation into law in 2001; it is also known as the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Under this legislation, all children must reach proficiency by 2014, as defined by each state's proficiency measures. The federal law requires annual testing in grades 3-8 and 11, in reading and mathematics, and also requires disaggregated reporting of scores on an annual basis to the federal government (Public Law Number 107-110, 2002).

**Outcome Assessment:** The measurement of how students have performed at the end of planned instruction or at the end of the year.

**Parental Engagement:** The deliberate effort to include parents in all aspects of their child's schooling. Within the RtI framework, this means that parents know...

**Pennsylvania State Standards:** The skills and competencies students should know and be able to do as a result of their participation in effective educational system.

**Reading specialist:** Reading specialists provide expert classroom instruction and assessment particularly for struggling students. They may also provide literacy leadership within the school in addressing the needs of all readers.

**Scaffolding:** Support given to assist students in learning a skill through explicit instruction, modeling, questioning, feedback, etc., to ensure student performance. Scaffolding should gradually be withdrawn as students become more independent of teacher support.

**Scientifically-based interventions** - should be preferred over evidence based

1. Scientifically based means research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs
  - a. Similar interventions and outcomes to those of interests
  - b. Number of participants and settings
    - Evidence-based – The integration of professional wisdom with the best available empirical evidence in making decisions about how to deliver instruction

**Scientifically Based Reading Research (SBRR):** Refers to empirical research that applies rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge. This research:

- Employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment.
- Has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective and scientific review.

- Involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions drawn.
- Relies on measurements or observational methods that provide valid data across evaluators and observers and across multiple measurements and observations.
- Can be generalized.

**Skill:** Something a student knows how to do expertly and automatically.

**Special education:** Specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a student with a disability, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and instruction in physical education. The term includes speech-language pathology services and may include other related services, travel training, and applied technology education, if they meet the definition of special education.

**Standards-Aligned Instruction:** The process of matching classroom curriculum, instruction, materials and assessment practices to the PA Academic Standards (what students are required to know and be able to do) and the Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA).

**Strategy:** The conscious use of a specific method.

**Supplemental intervention:** An addition to Tier 1 classroom instruction targeted to meet specific needs of students in one or more of the five critical elements of reading instruction. Supplemental materials: Materials that are aligned with and support the core instructional program.

**Systematic instruction:** A carefully planned sequence for targeted instruction.

**Targeted:** Focused instruction on an identified skill.

**Universal Screening (School-Wide Screening):** A quick check of all students' current level of performance in a content or skill area. This is administered three times per year.

## Resources

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